



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2026 Request for Proposal

General Information

Proposal ID: 2026-282

Proposal Title: Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency

Project Manager Information

Name: Valerie McClannahan

Organization: MN DNR - Forestry Division

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Project Basic Information

Project Summary: Project will reduce impacts of EAB through community management (inventory, planting assessment, management plan, removal, non-neonicotinoid treatment) and improve community forests by involving residents and planting a diversity of trees.

ENRTF Funds Requested: \$3,500,000

Proposed Project Completion: June 30, 2029

LCCMR Funding Category: Resiliency (A)

Project Location

What is the best scale for describing where your work will take place?

Statewide

What is the best scale to describe the area impacted by your work?

Statewide

When will the work impact occur?

During the Project and In the Future

Narrative

Describe the opportunity or problem your proposal seeks to address. Include any relevant background information.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) continues to spread to new communities each year and it is imperative for communities to protect healthy canopy, remove high risk unsafe trees, and plan for the growth of future canopy in order to meet community canopy cover goals. Managing canopy for the impacts of EAB will benefit the economy, environment, and human health.

It is estimated there were 2.65 million ash trees in populated areas of the state, making EAB potentially one of the most destructive forest pests ever to reach Minnesota.

What is your proposed solution to the problem or opportunity discussed above? Introduce us to the work you are seeking funding to do. You will be asked to expand on this proposed solution in Activities & Milestones.

This project will put vital tools in community's hands allowing them to define the way they need to manage EAB and enable them to assist their residents. Funded activities will include: conducting a tree inventory, removing ash trees, treating valuable ash trees with the non-neonicotinoid injectable insecticide emamectin benzoate, and planting trees for diverse forests. Communities will work with partners to assess infestations and provide resident education and engagement to manage and improve community forest canopy.

Assessments will be conducted to identify available planting spaces, as well as estimates for the number and size of trees needed to meet canopy goals. These assessments will provide tangible actions needed to meet statewide canopy goals and will be accessible through a web mapping tool.

What are the specific project outcomes as they relate to the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state's natural resources?

ENRTF funds will:

- Provide planting assessments and strategies for ~350 communities statewide to assist in meeting canopy cover goals;
- Administer up to \$2.6 million in grants to support the management of EAB through community forestry activities on public land and in urban and rural communities;
- Offer education and outreach to engage residents in ash management and community forestry activities;
- Conduct surveys to identify newly infested areas, notify communities and local units of government and provide technical and field assistance;
- Provide training workshops with currently infested communities to showcase successful management.

Activities and Milestones

Activity 1: Administer grant program providing \$2.6 million in grant funds to Minnesota communities to address the impacts of EAB.

Activity Budget: \$2,839,855

Activity Description:

A request for applications (RFA) will be issued for a grant program to provide \$2,600,000 in funds to an estimated 50 communities. Grant amounts are expected to be \$15,000 to \$100,000 per grant. Eligible applicants are local units of government, Tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, and schools.

Participating communities will be selected based on demonstrated need for financial and technical assistance, local forestry needs, collaboration and impact on vulnerable populations (e.g., low income, elderly, etc.), expected impact on creating healthy canopy cover, readiness to take on a project of their proposed scope and size, and commitment to sustainable community forestry programming.

Communities need funds to reduce the impacts EAB has and will have on their community. Grantees will implement their grant work plans with technical support from DNR and project partners.

ENTRF funds will be granted for community forestry and ash management activities, which can include:

- conducting a tree inventory
- developing management plans
- removing ash, or high-risk unsafe trees
- treating valuable ash with the non-neonicotinoid injectable insecticide and stagger loss of ash
- maintenance on existing canopy, such as needed pruning or watering establishment
- planting trees for diverse forests
- resident education and engagement

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Write RFA, develop selection criteria, issue RFA, conduct RFA engagement sessions.	October 31, 2026
Review proposals, select recipients, develop work plans and grant agreements.	December 31, 2026
Community forests will be protected and improved.	June 30, 2029
Quantify the value of environmental and economic benefits of work performed.	June 30, 2029

Activity 2: Community forest statewide tree canopy gap and planting assessment.

Activity Budget: \$207,148

Activity Description:

This project builds on previously funded canopy assessments, and statistically sampled tree surveys, by identifying and analyzing available planting space for ~350 communities that were identified as having an overall tree canopy loss and/or an ash canopy loss statewide. The Department of Natural Resources will conduct this analysis by mapping available planting space, and identifying viable and optimal planting locations. A planting report for each community and an interactive web application will be made available to share with mapped communities.

This project will analyze community forests for the years of 2020-2023 through the use of Minnesota's statewide second generation 3DEP Lidar dataset and 2023 NAIP aerial imagery. The compiled imagery will be processed to produce planting maps that are useable to communities throughout the state who don't otherwise have these resources and will

aid in management decisions. The reports and web application produced by the Department of Natural Resources will be user-friendly and accessible.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Available planting space and viability analyzed for ~350 communities statewide.	June 30, 2027
Maps and reports will be developed to showcase analysis.	December 31, 2027
Development of online dissemination tool.	December 31, 2028

Activity 3: Community forest technical support, outreach, and engagement.

Activity Budget: \$452,997

Activity Description:

DNR Urban and Community staff will offer webinars and in-person workshops throughout the state to discuss results, and assist communities in developing tailored management strategies to protect and increase canopy. Communities will be encouraged to attend these workshops. Webinars will be recorded and posted on the MNDNR's website so that it can continue to assist communities beyond the life of this project.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture will support grant review work with communities to promote monitoring-based management to slow and monitor EAB population growth and spread. This activity also quantitatively evaluates the impact of management work on the growth and spread of EAB populations in Minnesota. MDA will host EAB monitoring and management workshops with communities, with a focus on communities with new EAB finds.

Technical assistance and engagement support will be provided from project partners including the University of Minnesota, and Tree Trust. Grant funds will be used to conduct activities that strengthen community forests through resident education and engagement. This includes education about EAB and ash management, education and engagement in early detection of EAB, tree planting, new tree establishment and care, and volunteer stewardship of newly planted trees.

Activity Milestones:

Description	Approximate Completion Date
Outreach workshops and webinars hosted about canopy gap and planting analysis tool.	June 30, 2029
EAB infestations assessed in selected areas to track the distribution of EAB populations.	June 30, 2029
EAB monitoring and management workshops offered in collaboration with communities.	June 30, 2029
Communities provided residential engagement and community forestry outreach support.	June 30, 2029

Project Partners and Collaborators

Name	Organization	Role	Receiving Funds
Angie Ambourn	Minnesota Department of Agriculture	MDA will utilize Classified Scientist (0.75/3 years FTE). These staff will provide technical assistance to communities to identify local EAB management needs, community EAB monitoring and management workshops, and monitoring distribution of EAB.	Yes
Lucas Spaete	Department of Natural Resources - Resource Assessment	Staff will be responsible for conducting spatial analysis of canopy gap and planting space viability. This includes assessment of the number of trees and tree size needed to meet canopy cover goals, provide report on assessment, and create useable web application for individual community tree evaluation.	Yes
Ryan Murphy	University of Minnesota, Department of Forest Resources	Train residents and volunteers in EAB and ash management and to conduct community forestry activities.	Yes
Karen Zumach	Tree Trust	Community tree planting event planning, coordination, and resident engagement.	Yes

Long-Term Implementation and Funding

Describe how the results will be implemented and how any ongoing effort will be funded. If not already addressed as part of the project, how will findings, results, and products developed be implemented after project completion? If additional work is needed, how will this work be funded?

There had been an estimated 2.65 million ash in populated areas of the state, making EAB one of the most destructive forest pests ever to reach Minnesota. Managing the impacts of EAB and educating communities using the latest technology and most current information about their community forests will provide tremendous long-term economic and environmental benefits to the state and its residents.

The methods used in this project are repeatable and the analysis of available planting space and viability will remain as an available resource in perpetuity as a web-based application.

Other ENRTF Appropriations Awarded in the Last Six Years

Name	Appropriation	Amount Awarded
Protect Community Forests By Managing Ash For EAB	M.L. 2021, First Special Session, Chp. 6, Art. 5, Sec. 2, Subd. 06b	\$3,500,000

Project Manager and Organization Qualifications

Project Manager Name: Valerie McClannahan

Job Title: Cooperative Forest Management Assistant Supervisor

Provide description of the project manager's qualifications to manage the proposed project.

Valerie has been a DNR employee, working predominantly in urban and community forestry for 9 years. Valerie has extensive experience in state grant management in community tree management, as well as working with partners in urban and community forestry outreach. Valerie has technical skills in arboriculture and community forestry sufficient to provide statewide leadership, navigate policy, and provide direct community support. Valerie has a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture with a minor in Urban Forestry, as well as a Masters of Education, from the University of Minnesota.

Organization: MN DNR - Forestry Division

Organization Description:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)'s mission is to work with Minnesotans to conserve and manage the state's natural resources, to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and to provide for commercial uses of natural resources in a way that creates a sustainable quality of life. The Urban and Community Forestry program goal is to increase environmental services by creating and maintaining healthy urban and community forests.

Budget Summary

Category / Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Purpose	Gen. Ineligible	% Benefits	# FTE	Classified Staff?	\$ Amount
Personnel								
Project Administrators		Grant administration, contract management, education, and outreach campaign			33%	2.25	X	\$225,000
CFM Foresters		Conduct grant compliance checks.			33%	0.75	X	\$65,465
							Sub Total	\$290,465
Contracts and Services								
Minnesota Department of Agriculture	Subaward	Provide technical assistance to communities to identify local EAB management needs, community EAB monitoring and management workshops, and monitoring distribution of EAB.				2.25		\$210,552
University of Minnesota, Department of Forest Resources	Subaward	Train residents and volunteers in EAB and ash management and to conduct community forestry activities.				0.99		\$105,000
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Resource Assessment	Internal services or fees (uncommon)	Conducting spatial analysis of canopy gap and planting space viability. This includes assessment of the number of trees and tree size needed to meet canopy cover goals, provide report on assessment, and create useable web application for individual community tree evaluation.				2		\$207,148
Tree Trust	Subaward	Community tree planting event planning, coordination, and resident engagement.				0.48		\$48,750
Local unit of government, Tribes, nonprofits, and schools.	Subaward	Grants to help communities manage impacts of EAB infestations and grow healthy community forests.				0		\$2,600,000
							Sub Total	\$3,171,450
Equipment, Tools, and Supplies								
							Sub Total	-

Capital Expenditures								
							Sub Total	-
Acquisitions and Stewardship								
							Sub Total	-
Travel In Minnesota								
	Miles/ Meals/ Lodging	Vehicle and lodging for 15 work days.	DNR Travel for grant management, education and outreach:					\$1,800
							Sub Total	\$1,800
Travel Outside Minnesota								
							Sub Total	-
Printing and Publication								
	Printing	Emerald ash borer and tree care handouts.	Printing costs for emerald ash borer and tree focused education and outreach.					\$2,500
							Sub Total	\$2,500
Other Expenses								
		Direct and Necessary expenses	HR Support (~\$6,145), Safety Support (~\$974), Financial Support (~\$3,378), Communication Support (~\$1,902), IT Support (~\$20,015), and Planning Support (~\$1,371) necessary to accomplish funded programs/projects.					\$33,785
							Sub Total	\$33,785
							Grand Total	\$3,500,000

Classified Staff or Generally Ineligible Expenses

Category/Name	Subcategory or Type	Description	Justification Ineligible Expense or Classified Staff Request
Personnel - Project Administrators		Grant administration, contract management, education, and outreach campaign	Classified : The Urban & Community Forestry program at DNR is staffed to administer community forestry grants, while providing unique technical support, and engagement. The agency will backfill that part of the classified salary with available federal funding.
Personnel - CFM Foresters		Conduct grant compliance checks.	Classified : CFM Foresters conduct on the ground compliance checks of all planting to ensure work matches invoices, was planted correctly, and that the stock is healthy to ensure sound state investment. CFM Forester's time is paid for based on work conducted, this means that the agency will backfill out of federal and state funding, as applicable.

Non ENRTF Funds

Category	Specific Source	Use	Status	Amount
State				
			State Sub Total	-
Non-State				
			Non State Sub Total	-
			Funds Total	-

Total Project Cost: \$3,500,000

This amount accurately reflects total project cost?

Yes

Attachments

Required Attachments

Visual Component

File: [2e1b43dd-802.pdf](#)

Alternate Text for Visual Component

Brief description of the Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency proposal....

Supplemental Attachments

Capital Project Questionnaire, Budget Supplements, Support Letter, Photos, Media, Other

Title	File
UMN_Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency_Letter of Support	dc202fa3-dd3.pdf
Tree Trust_Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency_Letter of Support	7546c4b1-0fd.pdf
MDA_Protect Community Forests for Community Resiliency_Letter of Support	3984d5e1-945.pdf

Administrative Use

Does your project include restoration or acquisition of land rights?

No

Do you understand that travel expenses are only approved if they follow the "Commissioner's Plan" promulgated by the Commissioner of Management of Budget or, for University of Minnesota projects, the University of Minnesota plan?

Yes, I understand the Commissioner's Plan applies.

Does your project have potential for royalties, copyrights, patents, sale of products and assets, or revenue generation?

No

Do you understand and acknowledge IP and revenue-return and sharing requirements in 116P.10?

N/A

Do you wish to request reinvestment of any revenues into your project instead of returning revenue to the ENRTF?

N/A

Does your project include original, hypothesis-driven research?

No

Does the organization have a fiscal agent for this project?

No

Does your project include the pre-design, design, construction, or renovation of a building, trail, campground, or other fixed capital asset costing \$10,000 or more or large-scale stream or wetland restoration?

No

Do you propose using an appropriation from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund to conduct a project that provides children's services (as defined in Minnesota Statutes section 299C.61 Subd.7 as "the provision of care,

treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation to children")?

No

Provide the name(s) and organization(s) of additional individuals assisting in the completion of this proposal:

Patty Thielen, Director, Division of Forestry

Do you understand that a named service contract does not constitute a funder-designated subrecipient or approval of a sole-source contract? In other words, a service contract entity is only approved if it has been selected according to the contracting rules identified in state law and policy for organizations that receive ENRTF funds through direct appropriations, or in the DNR's reimbursement manual for non-state organizations. These rules may include competitive bidding and prevailing wage requirements

N/A